

Now, speaking of the stand-up, I thought the policy of our Government—how many times have we heard it from the President: “As they stand up, we will stand down.” He announced that in a speech to the American people. He has announced it in press conferences.

Well, here we are. In the trips I made to Iraq, General Petraeus, and his now successor, showed us charts that indicated 272,000 was the goal to train and equip. We are now at 264,600. That is as of June 14, 2006. The goal was 272,000.

Now, I think they moved the goal out to 325,000. But notwithstanding, how many have stood down? If the goal is to stand down as they stand up, and we have stood up 264,000—incidentally, in addition to the 264,000, there are 144,000 facilities protection service personnel working in 27 ministries. So you have a total of almost 400,000 Iraqis trained and equipped. And where is the stand-down?

I believe it is essential to accelerate this transition. That is the only way to reduce the targeting of our troops. It is the only way to invest other countries in the reality that the United States will not always be there, and they need to take a stake in their own region.

Right now, because of the way they feel about this administration, and because we are simply there “staying the course,” they have no compulsion whatsoever to come to the table. The only way you are going to bring them to the table, in my judgment, is to change that equation.

So we have a very significant, broad-based plan for an international diplomatic effort, beginning with bilateral, and working up, ultimately, through the bilateral to a summit that we know can be successful. That is the way in which we will invest in a new security arrangement for the region and protect the United States of America's long-term interests more effectively.

Mr. President, I see that another colleague has come and would like to speak now. I just close by saying that—

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, before the Senator closes, I would like to say a word or two with him.

Mr. KERRY. I would be delighted to do that.

Mr. WARNER. You finish your closing and I will wait.

Mr. KERRY. I would be happy to do so. I thank the distinguished chairman.

Mr. President, I heard the Senator from South Dakota say that there are occasions when a generation faces a struggle between good and evil. I agree with that. There is good and there is evil in this world. And what radical fascist extremists are doing in the name of religion is evil. I know as well as anybody here in the Senate that we have to stand up to that. But we have to stand up to it in the best traditions and values of our country. We have to stand up to it in a way that brings people to our side and does not alienate them.

It is incomprehensible to me that after these several years, where we started with “we are all Americans” post-9/11, and the world was at our side, that we have now seen radical, extreme terrorists isolate the United States of America in that particular part of the world. That is a failure of policy. And it is a failure that makes the United States of America less secure, not more.

Some people have said: Well, if you tell the terrorists that we are leaving in a few days—whatever period of time—I remind them, we are not leaving altogether. We are going to leave our special forces personnel who are capable of taking out the terrorists.

But the bottom line is that they are not waiting for anything today. We just lost two troops in the most brutal, horrible manner. They are not waiting now. And the fact is that unless we get Iraqis to resolve those issues I talked about, this will continue or even get worse.

So ignoring all the warnings of history itself, in a moment of total ideological excess, this administration has managed to make the ancient cradle of civilization look a lot like Vietnam.

I think there is a path forward. I think there is a better way to secure our interests. There is a better way to fight the war on terror. There is a better way to stand up to Iraq. There is a better way to respect their sovereignty. There is a better way to protect our troops.

I hope the U.S. Senate will look carefully at that.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, first, I would say this has been a good debate. Say what you want. I listened very carefully to what you said, and there are certain elements with which I agree with you. You and I have known each other a long time. I have great respect for your military career, the accomplishments you have had. I think you often shared that with regard to my modest career.

But I must say, I kind of bit my tongue here a few minutes ago when you said in our old days we used to have a colloquy and talked. I arrived on the floor of this Senate at around 9:30, when I first got here. It is exactly 12 hours now that I have been on this floor. And the first thing I said—and I don't want to personalize this—to the other side of the aisle was: Now, let's try to engage in a colloquy and exchange some views. I did say that since we were under a time constraint my questions would be charged to me, the replies from the other side charged to your side. It seemed to me fair enough. We had 5 hours before us at that time. But I have to tell you, I was flatly turned down.

So now, after 12 hours and your invitation to enter into a colloquy, I say to my good friend, you can ask me any question you wish. And I might start off with a question or two for you.

Mr. KERRY. I would be delighted.

Mr. President, let me just say to the distinguished chairman, I don't have a

question for him because he has not said anything outrageous.

Mr. WARNER. Beg your pardon?

Mr. KERRY. I said, the Senator from Virginia has not said anything outrageous that begs a question at this point.

But I will say this: I do understand the difficulties that the manager was under.

Mr. WARNER. Well, that is history. We are here now. Why don't we make the best of it?

Mr. KERRY. I know. But he had wanted more than 5 hours, as you know. We are where we are.

Mr. WARNER. We are here now.

Mr. KERRY. And I think he had more speakers than he was able to fit in.

Mr. WARNER. Well, I must say, I shared that on this side, but I was willing to take the heat.

Mr. KERRY. But I would be delighted to answer any questions.

Mr. WARNER. All right. We have the opportunity, Senator. Is there anything you wish to ask of me? And I will ask a few of you.

Mr. KERRY. Would the Senator not agree with me that the fundamental crisis of Iraq today is not particularly with Zarqawi having been killed and the treasure-trove of information we found—which, incidentally, happened because Iraqis gave Iraqis information and F-16s from outside came in and took him out. So there was an Iraqi component of that, which can still function with the setup that we are setting forward. But wouldn't the Senator agree, Mr. President, that the fundamental problem today is that 98 percent of the insurgency is Shia-Sunni, Sunni-Shia sectarian violence, militias within the military?

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I don't know what that fraction is. But in discussions with senior military, clearly, they have said the insurgents, the foreign invaders, the others who have come in have dropped in terms of—somewhat—numbers of incidents. And, indeed, the sectarian violence—Sunni versus Shia, Kurds to some extent—has grown enormously. So I cannot qualify it. But the Senator is correct.

And that leads me to my first question, because—

Mr. KERRY. Can I just finish the question?

Would the Senator then not agree that there are serious limits on what our troops can do to resolve sectarian violence?

Mr. WARNER. Well, that remains to be seen. They are, right now, for example, in Baghdad, fighting side by side. A very significant number of Iraqi troops, together with the components of our troops, are trying to bring about a greater measure of stability and security in the very capital of this country.

I think we should make known to those following the debate and those who listened to the debate with Senator LEVIN, Senator LEVIN's amendment was a sense of the Congress. The amendment of our colleague from Massachusetts very explicitly becomes law,